THINGS Plain and Weighty,

(10.)

REFERRED

Unto the Conſideration of both Houſes of Parliament, Aſſembled at *Weſtminſter*, *March* 25. 1690.

That Peace and Happineſs, Truth and Juſtice, Religion and Piety, may be Eſtabliſhed amongſt us throughout all Generations.

And now Reprinted with the Addition of more *WORDS OF TRUTH*, to prove whether as yet, at what Time, or Place ſoever Aſſembled, *They will hearken unto, and Obey the Law of their God.*

For the Tranſgreſſion of a Land, many are the Princes thereof: but by a Man of Underſtanding and Knowledge, the ſtate thereof ſhall be prolonged, Prov. 28 2.

Therefore my People are gon into Captivity, becauſe they have no Knowledge; and their Honourable Men are Famiſhed, and their Multitude are dried up with Thirſt, Iſa. 5. 13.

The People of the Land have uſed Oppreſſion and exerciſed Robbery, and have vexed the Poor and Needy; yea, they have Oppreſſed the Stranger wrongfully: And I ſought for a Man among them, that ſhould make up the Hedge, and ſtand in the Gap before me for the Land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it; but I found none. Therefore have I poured out my Indignation upon them, I have conſumed them with the Fire of my Wrath: their own way have I recompenced upon their Heads, ſaith the Lord God, Ezek. 22. 29, 30, 31.

London, Printed in the Firſt Month, in the Year 1691.

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BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

THINGS Plain and Weighty, &c.

IT is a ſlanderous Report of the Goſpel, *That ſome affirm thereof, as if it did allow to do Evil that Good may come*, Rom. 3. 8. God revealed himſelf otherwiſe of Old. *He is the Rock, his Work is perfect: for all his Ways are Judgment, a God of Truth and without Iniquity, Juſt and Right is he*, Deut. 32. 4. *Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and canſt not look on Iniquity: wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal Treacherouſly?* Hab. 1. 13. *God, that is Holy, ſhall be ſanctified in Righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 5. 16. *For I the Lord love Judgment, I hate Robbery for Burnt-offering, and I will direct their Work in Truth, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them*, Ch. 61. 8. *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* Job 13. 7. *For the Word of the Lord is Right, and all his Works are done in Truth. He loveth Righteouſneſs and Judgment*, Pſal. 33. 4 5. *The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no Unrighteouſneſs in him*, Pſal. 92. 15. *But Judgment ſhall return unto Righteouſneſs: and all the upright in Heart ſhall follow it*, Pſal. 94. 15. *The Works of his Hands are Verity and Judgment: all his Commandments are ſure. They ſtand faſt for ever and ever: and are done in Truth and Uprightneſs*, Pſal. 111. 7, 8. *The Lord is Righteous in all his Ways, and Holy in all his Works*, Pſal. 145. 17. More Texts might be alledged to Manifeſt, that his Glory is not to be advanced by ſinful Means. Indeed this cannot be, for it is contrary to his infinite Purity and Uprightneſs, with whom dwells no ſhadow of Evil.

But manifold Experience hath diſcovered, That when ſome have deſigned Rebellion for their own Ambition, Intereſt and Revenge, then they muſt have a Fig-leave to hide it from the multitude and generality of People, who do think and act *in their Simplicity*, 2 Sam. 15. 11. and they know not the very Truth of Things, and ſo they are led over to ſide with Injuſtice and Wrong. But what can at firſt ſeem more Good or Right than *Abſalom's* Sinfulneſs *Vow*, Verſ. 8. *Religion and the Glory of God*, as has been the Method of former of their Ages: This again is made uſe of as a Pretence to further their own wicked Enterprizes. Good God! that thy Name ſhould be ſo abuſed by * vile Miſcreants. That thou who doſt abhor, and haſt *Revealed thy Wrath againſt all Unrighteouſneſs of Men*, Rom. 1, 18. ſhouldſt be made uſe off to patronize it;

* *I do want Words to expreſs the exceeding Sinfulneſs of mine own Indignation at it.*

it; as if *Thou wert altogether such a one as themselves.* I am astonished to think of this horrible Perverting of thy Ways and Nature: Men would not presume to sin thus *With a high hand*, nor yet dishonour God after this manner; but now *They are doing these Things, and thou keepest silence*, Psal. 50. 21. And though thou seest all the *Evil*, *Iniquity* and *Treachery*, that is before mentioned; yet *Thou holdest thy Tongue when the wicked Man devoureth the Man that is more Righteous than he*, Hab. 1. 13. And if God did not now *keep silence*, and *hold his Tongue*, there could be no Tryal whether they would do thus or not. But notwithstanding all the Practices of Hypocrites, and the Wicked, (through which Strangers and the Ignorant may misapprehend the God whom we serve) thou wilt be Justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou Judgest at the last and great Day: And even now thou art in this, and all other Matters, as thou speakest in thy *WORD*.

The Authour of the New Testament observed, by his own Example, what he Taught and Commanded to others. When he was betray'd into the Hands of wicked Men, though he could have had more then Twelve Legions of Angels, yet he made not the least Opposition. He was the Son of God, *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords*, and consequently exempt from paying of Tribute unto them, as himself reasons, *Matt.* 17. 25. Yet rather than he would *give Offence*, he wrought a Miracle for the Payment thereof. And has left this standing Commandment to all his Followers, *Render unto Cæsar the Things which are Cæsars*, Matt. 22. 21. Now the principal Thing belonging to him is *Subjection* and *Ligeance*, as it is more particularly Explained, Rom. 1. 13. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake. Render to all their Dues; Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* These Things are as much due to the Supreame Magistrate, as is the common Duty of a Child to a Parent. He hath the same Right to them from his Subjects, which they have to their Goods, Estate or Honour. The Doctrine of Subjection and Obedience to Governours is laid down in as plain Terms, as any other Duty in the Gospel, and are sufficient to convince him who acts in Sincerity and Truth.

But those which are *Presumptuous*, *Self-willed*, of Troubled and Seditious Spirits, have found out some little and trifling Evasions against these express Texts. There is a way in the World of putting Interpretations, when there is no more need of them, than is to the most plain, obvious and common Expression. But this is a Trick either to wrest, or make the Commandments of God of none effect. The Wicked thus vindicate, or palliate their Transgression, and others in like manner justifie Rebellion. Let all Men in general remember, and take heed, That the great Law-giver, when every one comes to give account before him, will not be trifled with: Such Ways and Devices will not now pass in humane Courts and Judicatories. These *Children of the Devil*, these *Enemies of all Righteousness*, have so much the more to answer for; for *They do not cease to pervert the right Ways of the Lord*; making his Word, as it were, a Nose of Wax (some have Blasphemously called it so) to stamp any Impression, and mould it to any Shape, as serves their base sinister Designs, or present Purposes. In the end such Men will find that the *All-wise God* will not be out-witted by them. The Criminals are not to make their own Construction of the Laws against which they

have

have Offended, but muſt receive according to his righteous Judgment; and then *The Wrath of God which is now revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs of Men, who hold the Truth in unrighteouſneſs*, Rom. 1. 18. ſhall be actually executed upon them. And likewiſe will be rendred unto them *That are Contentious and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation and Wrath*, Rom. 2. 8. So they will really wiſh they had obey'd it, but it is then too late, when the time of Tryal is over. This is as certain and true, as that the Scripture will be fulfilled.

Thus ſome among us (*who ſeem to be Religious*, but by failure in one Duty it may be pronounced *their Religion is vain*, Jam. 1. 26.) do acknowledge Men ought to pay Obedience unto Governours; but then they ſay, Theſe Commands extend only to thoſe Kings who love Chriſt, and themſelves live Obedient to his Law. And whether they do or not, private Perſons are made Judges; and if they think, ſuch an one doth not, Subjects may lawfully diſobey and rebel againſt him. If this ſhould be granted, no King (howſoever Good or Righteous) would be ſafe in his Perſon; for ſo apt are Men in judging the Worſt, eſpecially of thoſe above them, that they would cenſure him to be a prophane Perſon, or an Hypocrite. If he was another *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, (even he was hated and ſpoken againſt) he would not be after their liking. Then they would not have this Man reign over them; they will outwardly conclude him to be an Enemy to *Jeſus*, and pronounce it as lawful to deſtroy him as Bears and Wolves. Whether he is ſo or not, an uncharitable Opinion or falſe Accuſation is ſufficient Ground with them to kill *The Lords Anointed*, againſt whom none could ever lift up his Hand and be Guiltleſs. This hath been the Divinity of ſome, and Miſchievous in its Effects; but let it be examined by that Word, which is to try the Doctrines, whether they be of Men or no.

Chriſt delivered that Command, *Matt.* 22. 21. of Submiſſion to Magiſtrates, at that very time, when *Cæſar* an Heathen Emperour was in the Throne, and *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* were Subordinate Governours. When our Saviour was going to ſuffer Death by unjuſt Judgment, *Peter* would have fought in defence of his Maſter, but was commanded to put up his Sword in the Sheaf. His Apoſtles preached the ſame Doctrine, as may be ſeen, *Rom.* 13. and 1 *Pet.* 2. *Which was after the Kings of the Earth ſtood up, and the Rulers were gathered together againſt the Lord and againſt his Chriſt.* For theſe Epiſtles of *Paul* and *Peter*, were written after that which is ſpoken of in *Acts* Chap. 4. All this conſidered together, doth manifeſt that many Teachers and Writers have interpreted the Goſpel contrary to what the Firſt *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles* intended; and theſe of later Times have put that Reſtriction, which they never deſigned. O ye Perverters of the meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, What Authority have ye to do theſe Things? By your Expoſitions and Gloſſes, ye have diminiſhed from the univerſal Obligation of the Commands. Wherefore do ye make diſtinctions, where the Law maketh none? To go back to the *Old Teſtament*, wherein ye ſo much truſt, What do ye think of *Saul*, from whom God had rent the Kingdom, and gave it to one better than he? And though *Saul* did ſeek after his Life, yet during all the Days God had appointed to *Saul*, *David*'s Faithfulneſs and Duty to him may be ſeen in the Books of *Samuel* the Prophet. There were many wicked Kings in *Iſrael*, yet to none did the People hence take occaſion to rebel, or refuſe their

lawful Injunctions; neither is the leaſt intimation from Gods Word ſo to do. It was not becauſe they were Jews and ſo the *Anointed of the Lord*, but even *Cyrus*, a Gentile, is thus called, *Iſa.* 45. 1. and unto * *Nebuchadnezzar God gave the Kingdom*, Dan. 2. 37. So they are indefinitely called *Gods Miniſters*, Rom. 13. 6. it is not ſaid of that ſingle one, but of all in general. The Kings rule ſeveral Countries, but over them all is the great King of the whole Earth, *The Lord and Governour of the World.* And he having ordained ſuch relational Duties between King and Subjects, Father and Children, Maſter and Servants, the Reaſon is alike in all, and *We are to be ſubject to our Kings with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward; for this is thank Worthy if a Man for Conſcience toward God, endure Grief, ſuffering wrongfully*, 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19.

**Woo was driven away from his Kingdom, and after he was ſomewhat abaſed for his Pride, his Counſellors and his Lords ſought unto him, and he was Eſtabliſhed in his Kingdom*, Dan. 4. 36.

Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy People, Acts 23. 5. upon no account, although he who is to *Govern after the Law, ſhould command Things to be done contrary to the Law*; yet ſtill no abuſive or undecent Language is to be uſed concerning him. In the Original place, *Exod.* 22. 28. it is doubly forbid to lay on greater enforcement, *Thou ſhalt not revile the Gods, nor curſe the Ruler of thy People.* But throughout this whole Nation of *England*, They have *Curſed their King*, Iſa. 8. 21. and have ſpoken all manner of Evil and Falſhood againſt him; *Neither can they prove the Things whereof they have accuſed him.* How do Men forget, or over-look ſuch plain Commands? when they are quick enough to find out any Thing in his Word, that may be wreſted to ſerve their wrong deſigns. When they meet with ſuch, They ſet their Brains on work for a plauſible Interpretation to delude the Hearts of the Simple. They neglected to *Put them in mind to be ſubject to the Principalities and Powers, to obey Magiſtrates*, Tit. 3. 1. Whereas if they could bring any Thing out of the *Old Teſtament* of *Zeal for the Lord of Hoſts* and *Fighting his Battels*, this was managed with all their Skill and Dexterity to ſtir up Sedition and Rebellion: But for thoſe againſt it, They did either omit, or faſten their own Sence, quite turning that of the Holy Spirit. And even in theſe Days ſuch an Example of one who did a great act of Injuſtice or Oppreſſion, ſhall by the *ſlights of Men* be alledged out of Scripture to make it ſeem lawful and juſtifiable. And they have learnt from the *Alcoran*, but not from the *Bible*, to judge or rather pronounce of Things according to the Succeſs: For they do call ſuch a Thing an *Eſpecial Providence* and *Immediate Deliverance ſent by God*, though the Means (by which it came to paſs) are againſt his expreſs Word and written Revelation. They ſearch and wreſt the Scriptures, and ſpeak out whatever may ſeem to cover, or ſomewhat excuſe their *Univerſal Error and Corruption*; But thoſe poſitive Commands, or plain Texts againſt it, are either expreſſed in the general only, or they are omitted, or they put an Interpretation of their own to *Make void thy* Law, *Pſal.* 119. 126. and ſuch *A true ſaying of God*, of no Signification. To apply Mal. 2. 7, 8. *The Prieſts lips ſhould keep Knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts. But ye are departed out of the way, ye have cauſed many to ſtumble at both Law and Goſpel*, by your Preaching contrary thereunto; *Ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi and ye have been partial in the Law*: Otherwiſe ye could not turn Religion into Rebellion;

Rebellion; nor alledge the *Word of Righteouſneſs* to maintain unjuſt Actions? For this doth not allow the leaſt Wickedneſs, ſo neither that, which is the greateſt Sin, that is commonly committed againſt Man.

For Rebellion is againſt the immediate *Ordinance of God*; which (though it may be ſuffered for a while) he doth commonly puniſh and defeat in this Life. One would think, Men might have taken Warning, by them that *Periſhed at the gainſaying of Core*, Jude 11. how the Earth opened and ſwallowed them up, as if not fit to live above Ground, who would have diſturbed that Order and Government there. Though this was ſet forth for an Example, for all that hereafter ſhould act Rebelliouſly; yet the Spirit of Diſobedience hath ſo worked in the Minds of Men, that they have not refrained from doing the like Things. Every Age ſince hath produced Inſtances of thoſe who have not dyed a Death common to Men. It would be endleſs to number all the Traytors that have been in our Nation; I am unwilling to accuſe mine own Country Men, but I am afraid we are a Reproach to our Neighbours, *That this Country is a Rebellious Country, and hurtful unto Kings*, Ezra 4. 15. as by our Records and Hiſtories it doth appear. But if we conſult them, we find that ſeveral of the Actors have came to a Miſerable and Untimely End. If the Buſineſs of *Dathan* and *Abiram* was afar off, and long ſince, theſe are later and come home. What if in our own Memory ſome have been deſtroy'd in a Rebellious War, others dyed like Dogs, and had their Carkaſes hanged up for a Spectacle. I ſpeak not this to inſult over thoſe poor Creatures; but the Judgments of God (in which may be hidden and reſerved Mercy) that have been in our Land, are to be recorded, *That the Inhabitants thereof may learn Righteouſneſs*, and know the Things which belong to their Peace. As the Apoſtle in 1 *Cor.* 10. mentioneth the Puniſhment which fell upon the Jews to dehort others from thoſe Things, which were the occaſion thereof; ſo that may be here repreſented according to Truth, and the exact Severity which fell upon them, that we may not luſt after and do unlawful Things, as ſome of them luſted and did, and fell and became as the Dung of the Earth. All theſe Things happened for Enſamples and ſhould be written for the Admonition of thoſe which come hereafter. *Happy and ſafe is he, whoſoever ſhall read and underſtand, and take heed of theſe Things.*

Any one, who hath but the common knowledge and fear of God, muſt be moved with Indignation to hear the *Enemies of the Lord blaſpheme*, and *the way of Truth evil ſpoken off*; to which nothing hath given greater Occaſion than the Carriage of the pretended *Religious*, eſpecially in two Things, Diſloyalty to the State, and Knavery between Man and Man. Then which nothing is more forbidden in Scripture; which, if rightly underſtood and obeyed, would make the beſt Men, and the beſt Subjects in the World. He who lives accordingly, is an Enemy to none; much leſs to him whom God hath placed over his People.

But humane Alterations and Conſtitutions are commonly long before accompliſhed; and there are in the mean while violent *Contentions* and *Strivings* among the People: Some crying for this, and another for that; and perhaps neither ſide knows throughly wherefore. Then the Sword is drawn againſt our own Country Men. *All the Inhabitants of this Land, even the Kings that ſit upon* Davids *Throne, and the Prieſts, and the Prophets, and all the Inhabitants of* England, *have for ſeveral Years been filled with Drunkenneſs.*

And

And they have been daſhed one againſt another, even the Fathers and the Sons together, Jer. 13. 13, 14. Neighbours and Kins-folks purſuing one another to Death. *For every Battel of the Warriour is with confuſed Noiſe, and Garments rolled in Blood.* We may ſee goodly Perſonages wallowing in their own Gore, trodden under Foot and no Man to regard them; We may hear the cruel Inſtruments of Death bellowing forth Woe and Deſtruction, the Shrieks and Groans of dying Men. *The Horſe-men lifteth up both the bright Sword, and the glittering Spear, and there is a multitude of ſlain, and a great number of Carkaſes, and there is none end of their Corpſes, they ſtumble upon their Corpſes.* A real Landskip of Miſery, occaſioned by their own *Sin* and *Folly*. They thought it at firſt a fine and gainful Thing to be Diſturbers of a quiet State, but ſuch is the Event thereof: and a worſe Loſs is to be feared further on: for *Seditions exclude Men out of the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 20, 21.

Turn us, O God of our Salvation, and cauſe thine Anger towards us to ceaſe. That People may come again to their Sobriety and Reaſon, and lay aſide all Malice, and all Guile, and Hypocriſies, and evil Speakings, and Revenge, Covetouſneſs, Oppreſſion, with all private Deſigns and Intereſts of their own. *Surely his Salvation is nigh them that fear him: that Glory may dwell in our Land*, Pſal. 85. 9. And ſuch, *who fear God*, will indeed do according to his Word and Commandment: Notwithſtanding all the Practiſes of that vaſt number of Hypocrites, and the Blaſphemy, or evil Speaking of them, *Which ſay they are Chriſtians, but are not*; for they do not obey the Laws of God, nor the Goſpel of his Son. They are *Worſhippers of God*, but they *do not his Will*; and therefore all their Prayers, for the good of this People, are not heard. *Mercy and Truth are met together: Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other*, Pſal. 85. 10. Let this Nation but once *do Righteouſneſs*, which is the Commandment and Will of the moſt high God; and we ſhall have *Peace*. *For the work of Righteouſneſs ſhall be Peace, and the effect of Righteouſneſs, Quietneſs and Aſſurance for ever. And my People ſhall dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in ſure Dwellings, and in quiet reſting Places*, Iſa. 32 17. 18. If Righteouſneſs were univerſally done from the higheſt to the loweſt, This alſo would as certainly be as God's Word is True: And we might give God ſo much Glory as to believe his aſſured Promiſes, and truſt upon his inviſible Protection. We might *believe in God* (and not ſay ſo only in the Words of our Creed) that it ſhall be even ſo, as it is here told us.

As Health is the greateſt Good to the natural Body, ſo is Peace to the Publick. It is better to have a conſtant Health, but when interrupted by Sickneſs, then a proper Remedy is ſeaſonable to reſtore: So in this World of Sin and Confuſion, it is better to prevent the miſchievous Effects at firſt; but when they come forth they muſt be Suppreſſed again; which may *Be cloſed up and mollified with Ointment inſtead of the ſeverer Remedies.*

Thoſe poor Creatures whoſe Carkaſes fell in *Ireland* laſt *Summer*, or ſhall be ye killed on the Sea or Land (ſee *Iſa.* 14. 16.) will come and ſay unto me in the other World, *This Man would have preſerved our Lives*; and accordingly it had been done if the King and Parliament had heard the *Word of God* by my Mouth and obeyed it, when this *Teſtimony* was delivered in unto them on *April*, 2. 1690. But now the Blood of Thouſands cries out to the Lord for Vengeance upon the Authors thereof. Though it is now hid from their Eyes, and an unſeen Enemy doth hinder them from diſcerning it; then they will fully know and admire the *Preciouſneſs and Excellency of Divine*

Truth

Truth which would *preserve Life*, Gen. 45. 5. the greateſt Good that can be done here. God doth *send it before* for this very End and Purpoſe; and his *Truth* doth always accompliſh this bleſſed effect where it is underſtood and received: All Glory and Praiſe will be given unto God for the ſame. The ſame God, who is the *Creator* and *Preſerver*, will be again the *Reſtorer* of Mankind. Sirs, ye ſhould have took counſel of God, and have been directed by his Word, not to have done that thing, which occaſioned all this Harm and Loſs.

But what if our Rights and Liberties ſhould be Invaded, our true Religion Perſecuted, and we compelled to a falſe one. And thoſe in Authority do take too much upon them, as to become Arbitrary, Unjuſt and Tyrannical?

This is the Reaſoning of *Fleſh* and *Blood* againſt the Commandment of the Goſpel, and in like manner againſt forgiving of Injuries. We are not to go according to the dictates of *Fleſhly Wiſdom*, or of natural and preſent Preſervation to *Inherit the Kingdom of God*. To ſubmit to a light Inconvenience for that, is very conſiſtent with true Prudence. But this is an Argument from an abuſe which may happen; and if that were ſufficient to condemn, or ſurceaſe a Thing, we might do ſo as to all; for nothing is ſo excellent in its own Nature but may be corrupted. The beſt Things through the baſeneſs of humane Nature are moſt liable to abuſe; and it hath been obſerved that more Rebellions and Diſorders happen under a remiſs and eaſy kind of Government, than what is more Arbitrary and Oppreſſive. An inſtance whereof may be in our own Kingdom compared with the Nations round about. But to purſue the Thing higher then from the Inconvenience and Event only. There is not one Obligation or Duty to God or Man, but a ſeeming Miſchief may enſue upon it. He hath been pleaſed to try our Obedience in ſuch kinds of Relation; if we do our Parts, we may expect the Good and Recompence thereof; others are to perform theirs at their own Peril or Encouragement. Subjects ought not to reſtrain the Exorbitancy of Kings; for ſaith the Scripture, *Againſt a King there is no riſing up*, Prov. 30. 31. *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power, and who may ſay unto him, What doſt thou?* Eccleſ 8. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned*, Pſal. 51. 4. ſaid *David* in his Confeſſion to God for the Murther of *Uriah*; which ſhews he was accountable to God only for that wicked Action. In the *New Teſtament* is a poſitive Command of Chriſt, *But I ſay unto you that ye reſiſt not Evil*, Matt. 5. 39. which extends to what is done by thoſe who have Dominion over us, and an Injury offered by a private Perſon. Yet I will not be afraid to ſpeak out: If either ſhould take advantage over Paſſive Obedience, or the Forgiving Temper, as to domineer or affront the more, it is baſeneſs in the mean while: And it will be determined who Acts beſt, They who go according to the dictates of corrupted Nature, which is Proud and Cruel; or who have it corrected by the *Wiſdom from above*, which makes it *pure, peaceable, gentle and eaſy to be entreated*. Let them be never ſo great in their own, or the Worlds Opinion, they are but Men. And there is one above, *Who ſhall cut off the Spirit of Princes, he is terrible to the Kings of the Earth*, Pſal. 76. 12. When they rage moſt, he can put an Hook in their Jaws, and lead them back from their Purpoſes. *Becauſe thy rage againſt me, and thy tumult is come up into mine Ears: Therefore will I put my Hook in thy Noſe, and my Bridle in thy Lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou cameſt*, Iſa. 37. 29. What an Ignorant,

Foolish, and Proud Expression (for Pride is made up of Ignorance and Folly) is that of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my Hands*, Dan. 3. 15. and when for all his Threatning the Three Children would not comply with his Idolatry and false Worship, *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury and the form of his Visage was changed*, Vers. 19. but when God doth in the least manner shew and manifest himself, The proudest two Footed Creature is *astonished* and doth submit: As it afterwards appeared by him. And whosoever now hath the Faith of *Moses*, he doth not *Fear the Wrath of the King, for he endures as seeing him that is Invisible*, Heb. 11. 17. For what is a Dying Man to the Eternal God? A Worm of Five or Six Foot long, whose presence is little and circumscribed to a small Room, What is this unto the mighty God, who hath Heaven for his Throne and the Earth for his Foot-stool, and filleth all Places and all Things with his Presence. If it be the good Pleasure of our God, he can save his People from the Violence of the greatest Tyrants, or turn them into the *Rod of his Anger*, Isa. 10. 5. And then we are patiently to suffer, knowing who striketh, and learn by his Judgment to be reformed from our Sins: We may send up Prayers and Tears to him, *In whose Hand is the Heart of the King, and he turneth it whithersoever he will*. God can either alter his Thoughts, or suffer him to fall by an Accident or Sickness, see *1 Sam.* 26. 9 10. or which way it pleaseth his Almighty Wisdom. *I gave thee a King in mine Anger, and took him away in my Wrath*, Hos. 13. 11. *Again they are minished and brought low through Oppression, Affliction and Sorrow. He poureth Contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in the Wilderness, where there is no way. Yet setteth he the Poor on high from Affliction*, Psal. 107. 39. 40. 41. He can do it without our assistance; for he doth then more Magnify his own Power: Neither are we to *Break any of these least Commandments and teach Men so*, Matt. 5. 19. least we be in danger to be shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven, and in the mean while *We suffer as Evil doers*.

The King is bound by Oath to keep Righteousness, and minister true Judgment unto his People; for the Observation or Neglect of which he is to give account unto God at the last Day. But now they ought to bear somewhat with one another, there being Faults and Infirmities both in King and People. For if we know the Truth, and search to the bottom, we shall find that those Seeds of Evil within, do make all the disturbance in the World; which are provided against by the Grace of him, who is greater than *Solomon*; and then all People might dwell safely every Man under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree, from one end of the Earth to the other, all the Days of our Kings and Governours.

Yea, Those *Seeds of Evil* shall at length (towards the end of Time) be so perfectly Cured and utterly done away, that all Governours and Government of Men shall for ever cease and determine, for there will be no need thereof: But *God and Christ will reign alone in that Day*.

Christ, the Eternal Word, hath laid down sure and lasting Foundations of Government, *To order it, and to establish it with Judgment, and with Justice from henceforth even for ever; The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this*, Isa. 9 6, 7. The Lord hath given such Laws, Rules, and Directions, to the World, that, if they were observed, would produce a perpetual Peace, and firm Settlement throughout the whole Earth: But by Disobedience and turning Aside

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comes in Confusion and every evil Work, as may be seen by what hath been aforesaid.

And having manifested the Truth, and shewed those relational Duties between King and Subjects, I come now to apply it to the People of *England*, viz. In the late Revolution of putting down one King and setting up another, in this they are *a Nation that have not done Righteousness*, but they have *resisted*, Rom. 13. 2. and *Forsook the Ordinance of their God*, Isa. 58. 2. They have actually departed from that established and fixed Order of Things he hath set up. So they are in danger to *Die in their Sins*, John 8. 24. *And shall utterly perish in their own Corruption*, 2 Pet. 2. 12. Now is their Danger nearer than when we first warned them, and the Things do make haste whereof we have so often foretold them. Much more of their Life is spent, and the day of Immortality is at Hand. So that we do come with the greater Earnestness to rescue them from the place of Torment, to pull them (though never so much against their Wills) *Like Brands out the Fire*. If I should quite let them alone, and they would now have it so, yet if they should *Die in their Sins*, than they will wish otherwise; and will desire exceedingly that they had attended unto what is here laid before them. And that knowing the Time, that they do day by day approach nearer, I do now testifie with the greatest Earnestness and Reality, that their several Persons shall appear before the Judgment Seat of God, to give account, and receive for what they have done concerning this Matter. *Seeing they despised the Oath, by breaking the Covenant (when lo, they had given their Hand) and have done all these Things, they shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely mine Oath that they have despised, and my Covenant that they have broken, even it will I recompence upon their own Head*, Ezek. 17. 18 19.

This is full and direct to the present Purpose; for it was spoken as to the *King of Babylon*, who was an Heathen, and as much an Idolater and Estranged from God as a Popish Prince. But the Almighty doth take the more notice, when through his own People his *Name is prophaned or blasphemed amongst the Heathen*. He calls it in a peculiar manner, *Mine Oath*, and *my Covenant*. It is yet a greater Aggravation to *Hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*. It is worse to give Occasion for *The way of Truth to be evil spoken of*. And therefore, when those of the pure Reformed Religion had Sworn a solemn Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy to a King, (whom then they knew to be a Papist) his lawful * Heirs and Successors, in so strict and particular a manner, as Words can well express; when they had Crown'd him and performed Fealty, which probably was a like Ceremony which the Prophet here calls, (When lo, he had given his Hand) to *Despise the Oath*, and *break the Covenant*, makes *Protestantism* to stink, and be evil spoken off throughout the World; and offends every one who is zealous for his God, and hath a right Sence of his infinite Holiness and Uprightness.

* *Which is contradistinguish'd to Usurpers and Intruders.*

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In this Alteration they did *take Counsel*, but not *of the Lord*, Isa. 30. 1. They had respect unto what they thought present Conveniency, but did not consult his Word, nor seek unto him for Direction by Prayers and Humiliation: But it was done by their own Counsels and Manner of Vote. There were about an Hundred and fifty Members in the Lower House, and many in the Upper, who remained stedfast to their Oaths and Duty; and did not consent to the Counsel and Deed of them. And then if we deduct from the other Side, all those who gave their Suffrage either out of *Ignorance*, or *Fear*, *Interest*, or *Revenge*, or Men pleasing, or some other sinful or ungodly Principle, It will truly appear that the Thing was not done *By the Grace of God*, but by Men of corrupt Minds and Passions. And afterwards *They would cover with a Covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add Sin to Sin.* Not knowing, that hereby they do *Treasure up to themselves Wrath against the day of Wrath.* The Scribes and Pharisees of our Time have found out several Glosses, Distinctions, Restrictions, and Sentiments of their own Devising, by which they would slubber over Perjury and sanctifie Injustice. And there was never any Corruption of this nature since the World began, but there have been also found out Priests to justifie it, and Judges and Lawyers to make it legal. But it is manifest from, *Deut.* 32. 4. *Hab.* 1. 13. *Isa.* 5. 16. and 61. 8. *Job.* 13. 7. *Psal.* 33. 4. and 111. 7, 8. and 145. 17. *Rom.* 3. 8. afore cited, and sundry other places of his revealed Word, That this Revolution is none of Gods Work or Doing, in which he is well pleased: Only what he suffers, as he doth all the Sin and Wickedness in the World, and so he did the Manners of the Israelites Fourty Years in the *Wilderness*. *Wherefore will ye plead with me? Ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord*, Jer. 2. 29.

Then they did abrogate the former Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and impose a new one. *Shall such escape by Iniquity?* And have done all these Things, they shall not escape. *The Lord looketh from Heaven: he beholdeth all the Sons of Men. From the place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth. He fashioneth their Hearts alike: He considereth all their Works.* He knoweth all those particular Proceedings from the very beginning to this Time; every Thing they have done day by day, all the several Occurrences, all the lying Stories and false Accusations, the close and hidden Acts of Hypocrisie, all the tricks of *Machiavelian Policy*, and the several kinds of Sin and Wickedness. *These Things have you done, and I kept silence; but I will reprove and set them in order before you.* As they were committed from Time to Time, so will he bring every secret Thing into Judgment.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely mine Oath that they have despised, and my Covenant that they have broken, even it will I recompence upon their own Head. Here the Threatning is confirmed as much as possible, *as I live*, which is as sure as he is God, which again is as certain as there is a World, and any Thing in it, (for some one must have made all these Things that are made, and he is God.) So certainly will he *Recompence it upon your own Head.* If we mistake not in the History of the Bible, This afterwards happened to be true; for when *Zedekiah* contrary to his Oath rebelled (compare *Ezek.* 17. with *Jer.* 52.) *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, came with his Army against *Jerusalem*, and took it, and killed the Sons of *Zedekiah*, and put his own Eyes out, and slew the *Princes of Judah*, and led the People into Captivity. And how know we, but the same God may yet stir up and enable

able an Army of *Cruel French* and *Irish* to invade our own Nation? Or suffer the Inhabitants of this Land to fall into Discord and Confusion, as in our late Civil Wars and Commotions. He will punish this National Sin of Perjury, either in this World, or the World to come. God is highly provoked and dishonoured by every false Oath. The several Persons, who take it, pray that God would help them according to the Truth they speak and intend to perform; but prevaricating that, their Prayer shall turn into their own Bosom, and so they are in Danger to be destitute of his Aid, without which they shall perish.

As ye have already despised his Oath, so ye may here despise his Word and Truth; but beware least that also come upon you, *Behold ye Despisers, and wonder and perish.* Take heed least ye provoke God yet more, and so fall into a great degree of his Wrath and sore Displeasure. It is an easie matter to slight it all off, and *Put away his Statutes from you*, Psal. 18. 22. but ye cannot possibly avoid your own particular Deaths, whereby ye *Fall into the Hands of the living God*; and then he will account with all those who behave themselves Contemptuously and Stubbornly against him. Ye may now look upon these as vain and troublesome Imaginations, and not suffer them to enter into your Mind; *Eat, Drink and be Merry*, have recourse to Company, and so forget or harden your selves against what is here offered unto you; but as soon as ever ye are slipt out of the Flesh, ye will be sensible of the Truth, and Significancy of them, do what ye can. *When the two Prophets shall be slain, They that dwell upon the Earth shall make Merry, and shall send Gifts one to another; because these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth*, Rev. 11. 10. Whereas it would be some Advantage and Help for them, if they could Eat or Drink any Thing which would make themselves Immortal, and so prevent their own coming to Judgment. But now seeing that the Decree is past upon all Men, *Once to Die, and after that the Judgment*, they had better hearken, and also comply with those, who would have hindred their approaching Ruin and Condemnation; for though they falsly think so, yet we do not *Torment Men*, but only persuade, exhort and testify that Mankind do repent off, and forsake those Sins, which when put in remembrance off, do cause present Vexation, and (unless prevented after the aforesaid manner) do consign them over unto eternal Death and Misery.

We have sinned with our Fathers, we have committed Iniquity, we have done Wickedly, *and have Rebelled, even by departing from thy Precepts, and from the Judgments.* This Nation hath slain the Lord's Anointed; for which is kept an Anniversary Day of Humiliation and Repentance. His Son was Twelve Years kept out of his Kingdom, for which also is an Anniversary Day of Thanksgiving, with Forms of Prayer and Devotion answerable to it. *His Brother, who hath the same Right, stands now Excluded.* Be not deceived, God is not mocked: Though he now *Holds his Tongue*, and seems to be *Gon afar off*; yet even now he speaks unto us out of his *Word*, and is not far from every one of us. However we must meet with and appear before him, when the Judge shall testifie himself, and give a clear account how we have Trespassed against our God by *Transgressing his Laws, changing the Ordinance and breaking the everlasting Covenant*, Isa. 24. 5.

Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this Thing, Ezra. 10. 2. We learn hence and from other places of Scripture, That there is no other way to *Escape*, but to repent, and undo what we have done; for that is the nature

of true Repentance, that if it were to do again, we would not do it; and also to undo a Fault as much as can be. Accordingly when ye do once again assemble in Parliament, ye may this know, that no Man or Woman whatsoever, nor any Foreign Prince, State, or Potentate hath Power or Authority to prorogue or dissolve your Meeting, but only your Rightful King. And it is the express Command of the Great and Almighty God, *Learn to do Well, seek Judgment, RELIEVE THE OPPRESSED*, Isa. 1. 17. or as it is in the Margent, *Righten* the Oppressed. So that ye may take *Counsel of the Lord, (whom ye are to obey and keep all his ways)* and by Fasting and Prayer, both Publick and Private, seek out of the whole Book of his Commandments, and from thence you may find that ye ought to do Righteousness, and send Commissioners to restore your *Aged and Oppressed King JAMES* to the Seat and Throne of his Fathers; and reinstate him after the same Judiciary Manner, as he was Unrighteously Deprived. Things may be yet Peaceably and Prudently Adjusted, and Established upon the *Sure Foundation of Righteousness*. A general and comprehensive Act of Oblivion might pass; and (in this *Great Time* which is drawing on, *of the Reconciliation of all Things*.) *It might be so ordered as it was in the Restauration of *David* after the Conspiracy and Rebellion of his Son, *That not so much as one Man be put to death*, 2 Sam. 19. 22. All former Transactions may be passed by; and Things for the future may be firmly Established, and secured for Christian Liberty against the undue Incroachments of Popery and Arbitary Government. *For it shall come to pass in that Day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will break his Yoke from off thy Neck, and will burst thy Bonds, and STRANGERS shall no more serve themselves of him. But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raise up unto them,* Jer. 30. 8, 9.

* *If it was indeed True and Real, that a cannon Bullet came so near to one as to take off part of his Coat and Waistcoat, and raise up the Skin of his Shoulder. This seems to have been a Sign given that God would remove the Government off from his Shoulders, and yet not hurt his Person. He would sooner go to Heaven, if He had continued in that Station the Creator of Mankind had placed him; and if He would now willingly and freely Resign up unto him, whose Right it is.*

Our Nature is somewhat aukward and averse to repent: What to undo and recant? To accuse our selves of Fault, Folly and Shame; to be a Reproach and have our Esteem lessened among wise Men; and the Nations round about; all this seems hard in our Natural Proud State. *Surely the Princes of Zoan are Fools, the Counsel of the wise Counsellors of Pharoah is become brutish*, Isa. 19. 11. was a blunt, but true Expression of an antient Prophet; and is at this Day verified in our own Country. It is somewhat irksome to be told hereof. But yet it is not unreasonable to confess what we cannot deny our Imperfection and want of Foresight. It is an act of Prudence to return from an Errour, and of such an one, who is able to discern what is really Good and Profitable. It is an advancement to a better State. Was it not more Unreasonable to do those Things at first, than it is

now

now to leave them when they are discovered to be False and Unrighteous? But chiefly which should have been mentioned in the First place, seeing ye have offended against a great and good God, ye are required, *Only acknowledge thine Iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God*, Jer. 3. 13. by despising his Oath, breaking his Covenant, and forsaking his Ordinance. Either ye must do this now, which through his Goodness and Mercy may avail to his Forgiveness and Reward; or ye will wish hereafter in vain, ye had done it to turn from your selves Guilt and Condemnation. It is better to be liable unto a little and short Shame at present, and to lose somewhat of your Esteem, (if it should be so) than after your Bodies have for some while slept in the Dust, to *Rise up to Shame and everlasting Contempt*, to be a Scorn and Derision before the general Assembly of Angels and Men at the Judgment of the great Day. Trust ye not your eternal Happiness or Misery to the Imaginations and Sayings of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, who according to Form do pray for the true Knowledge and Understandnig of Gods Word; † but by their Preaching and Living they do not set it forth, nor shew it accordingly. Nor yet to the Judgment and Decision of some *Temporising Universities*, or any other *Assembly of Divines*, whose Religion is *Principibus Placuisse viris*, &c. *Who have changed the Truth of God into a Lie*; and have Studied to please *The Creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.* Amen. They have so modelled and varied *his Truth*, which *endureth to all Generations*, Psal. 100. 5. that it might serve the present juncture of Affairs; and that Themselves might *At all Times* (past, present and to come) *walk according to the course of this World.* Nor yet be ye prevailed upon by the Voice of the Multitude of dying Men, or the *Contradiction of Sinners*; but hearken unto what the *Spirit* saith expresly and clearly, *Little Children let no Man deceive you: He that doth Righteousness, is Righteous, even as he is Righteous. In this the Children of God are Manifest, and the Children of the Devil: Whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother*, 1 John 3. 7, 10. *That no Man* (of whatever Rank or Degree) *go beyond and defraud his Brother* (much less a Father) *in any Matter* (which extends to a Kingdom or Inheritance) *because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such*; as *we have also forewarned you and testified*, 1 Thess. 4. 6. now so many times that the *Word is Established.* Wherefore I take you to record this Day, from henceforth and for ever, that I am pure from the Blood of all Men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the Counsel of God. Though for this very Thing only, I have endured Persecution, Danger and Loss; and ye say the same Thing of me as was formerly of *Paul*, a Messenger of the Lord, that I am a *Pestilent Fellow*, and a *mover of Sedition*, and *it is not fit he should Live.*

† *Strange! that (according to the Ignorance and Blindness of the antient* Jews, Acts 13. 27.) *People should hear the Scriptures read every day, and yet by not complying with the true intent and meaning of them, they are* Fulfil'd in themselves to their own Condemnation.

But if ye do send me again unto Prison, or proceed against me as an Evil doer, This is to *Add Iniquity to your Iniquity*, and *not to come into thy Righteousness.* Which if ye go on to do, your selves will be *Blotted out of the Book of the Living, and not be written with the Righteous*, Psal. 69. 27, 28. It is the same Thing, as if ye should say, *We will not do according to the Laws of God, but Punish or Hang this Fellow for setting them before us.* To persecute him, whom Christ sends, is to *Kick against the Pricks*; which the more fiercely ye do, the more ye will Wound your selves. I am a poor decrepit Creature, and partake of the same Flesh and Blood; but if ye will prosecute that Manifestation of the *Word* and *Truth of God*, which appears forth through me.

me. This is to *Fight against God*, Acts 5. 39. and 23. 9. and to inflict Punishment on the Godhead himself if he were liable to Suffering; but however because we have Sence and Weakness to receive, and this may be suffered to be in your Power, ye are ready to do the same unto his Servant. It is by some esteemed a piece of Pride and Bravery that *They can do Things against the Truth*; and as their Fathers did before them, *Persecute and kill the Prophets*, who were appointed to make it known. But let such consider, or they shall feel, that all those who of set Purpose go against those Pillars of Truth (whereby God hath determined to judge the World) will find, That they had better run their Heads against a Stone Wall, which may dash out their Brains, but that remains Unshaken. And when the same God, (who carrieth away the Generations of Mankind, *as with a flood, they are as a sleep* Psal. 90. 5.) shall call them to account for their Usage to those *Prophets and wise Men, and Scribes* (under which last I am comprised) *whom he sen*. Matt. 23. 34. Such shall know that they had better let them alone. And let those of the present Age, albeit they have humane Authority on their side, take heed to themselves, what they intend to do as touching any one, who doth only bear both Testimony against a National Sin and Corruption, to keep up the Government of him, who is *God of Gods*, and *Lord of Lords the great King of all the Earth*; and also to assert (notwithstanding all Transgression) the eternal and immutable Rules of Judgment and Righteousness.

See my printed Apology.

Richard Stafford, *a Scribe, according to the Promise and Sending of Jesus Christ.*

POSTCRIPT.

THe People of this Nation are to take Notice, That these Things being Written and Published will have the same Effect (To convince them of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment, that they may be without Excuse) *all one as if they were spoken out by word of Mouth, and proclaimed with a loud Voice throughout the several publick Places of our Land.*

FINIS.